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Intermezzo in Images: Illustrations, Part 2

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Intermezzo in Images: Illustrations

Part 2

The eyes love fair and varied forms
and bright and beautiful colors.
– Augustine (398)



Illustration 9: Kevin Robinett, "New Mexico Landscape," c. 1990 (pastel chalk on poster-board), private collection: "It is closer to the prairie than it looks." (p. 154)

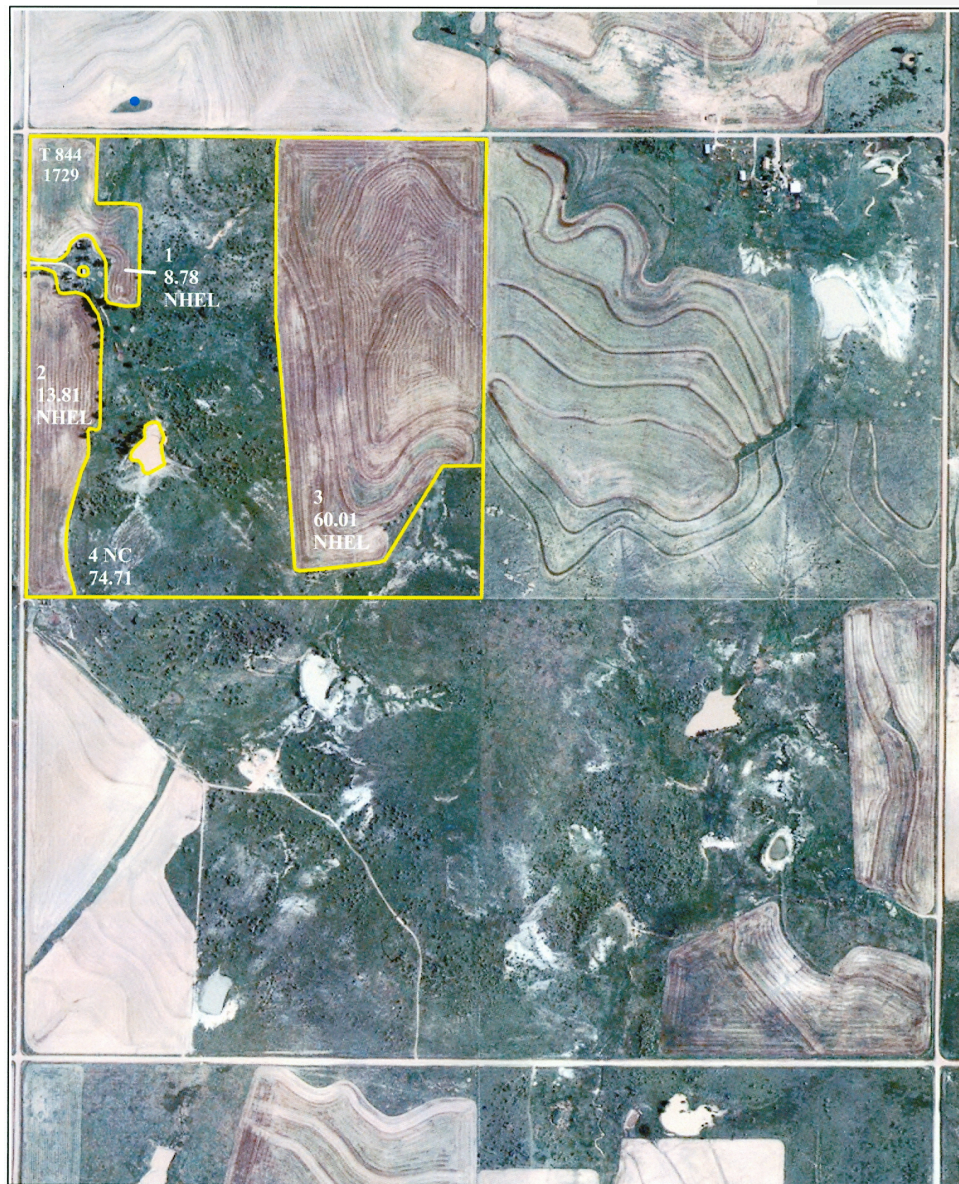


Illustration 10: "Winston Family Farm," Lone Wolf, Okla., c. 2000 (satellite view color photograph), private collection: "its rough beauty, strangely like... New Mexico." (p. 161)

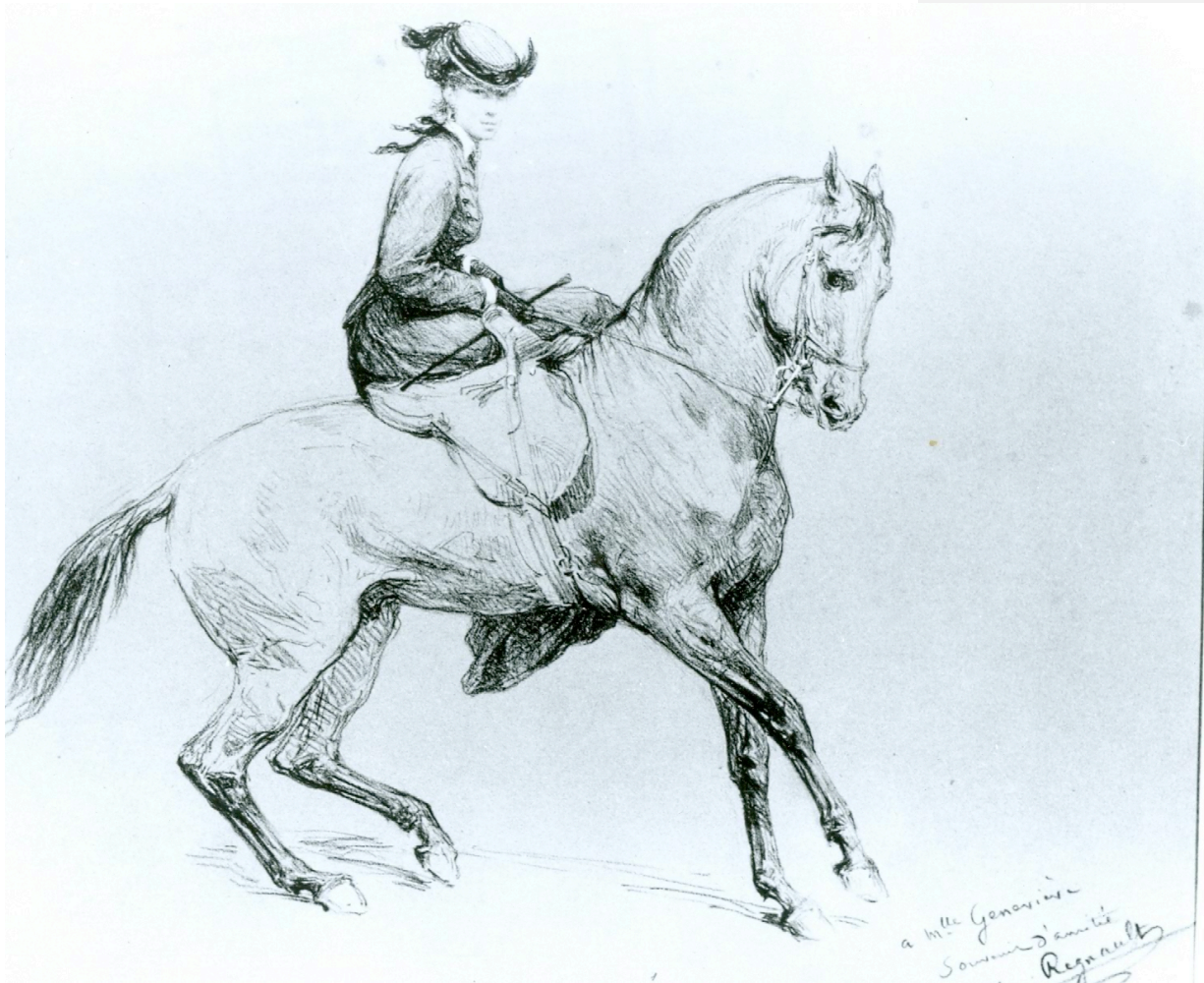


Illustration 11: Henri Regnault, "Geneviève Bréton on Horseback," 1867 (pen-and-paper drawing), private collection: "Hébrard enthused over a recently published diary." (p. 194)



Illustration 12: Sybilla von Bondorf, "St. Francis and the Sheep," c. 1485 (gouache on paper) in Bonaventure's The Life of St. Francis, British Library, London: "images ... chosen and adapted to the spiritual needs and interests of... women." (p. 206)



Illustration 13: "In the Woods," Makanda Township, Ill., 2006 (color photograph), private collection: "home back home." (p. 224)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL
REALISTS	2	0	1	4	2	1	0	6	2	0
IDEALISTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

D. FRADON

Illustration 14: Dana Fradon, "Realists vs. Idealists," 1976 (ink drawing) in The New Yorker (June 28, 1976): "I would not work... otherwise." (p. 247)



Illustration 15: "Homeward Bound," Vienna, Austria, 2005 (color photograph), private collection: "they almost look American." (p. 260)



Illustration 16: “A European Gothic,” near Grindelwald, Switzerland, 1997 (color photograph), private collection: “repatriates, immigrants in reverse.” (p. 265)

Dialogue with *Del Ankers*

DA: *"Although I prefer taking pictures – I was a professional photographer, you know – I enjoyed reviewing your intermezzo in images."*

JSA: *"Thank you, Mr. Ankers. I thought that you'd be happy to see that baptismal family portrait you took many years ago in Alexandria."*

DA: *"Yes, I am. As I recall, your brother Ben couldn't sit still to save his life. He was like President Truman, constantly fidgeting."*

JSA: *"I wonder if you would consider the other pictures here for a moment. It occurred to me that there are some similarities."*

DA: *"There are. The Krueger-Scott mansion, for instance, is another neglected 'Glory of the Seas' beached where it no longer belongs. It needs another port than Newark. And your home in the woods looks like the Glory, without its sails, on a sea of snow. It's a fine hull whose masts and canvas can only be imagined in the trees."*

JSA: *"The closest landscape is my wife's family farm in Lone Wolf."*

DA: *"Well, it's a long way from the ocean, Mr. Allen, but the farm and its southwestern proxy, the New Mexico landscape, provide the same spacious feel as the open sea. The distant horizon, framed either by the satellite or by the sky, is just as romantic. I can see why the Native Americans and the settlers fought over it so much."*

JSA: *"None of the portraits seems to belong to the land like that, do they?"*

DA: *"No, they don't, though they all seem to be right at home, like the Allen family portrait on the front sidewalk. The two images of you and your wife – one in Oklahoma, the other in Switzerland – are also well sited. The new American Gothic is matched by its European counterpart. In each image, like all classical portraits, the background is*

Comment [1]: The One-Eyed Photographer

To photograph the family at my christening, Mom and Dad made an odd choice. I am not sure they knew, but Del Ankers the photographer had only one good eye. That did not stop him, however, from establishing a successful studio, taking pictures of prominent politicians. Before recent changes in Secret Service protocols, Ankers just appeared at the White House with camera in hand to photograph every president from Franklin Roosevelt to Gerald Ford. He was a veritable Washington institution, a lifelong resident of DC's inner-city, and a witness to many historical events, such as the riots after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. All of this was long before Kodak, Sony, and now Nokia put a camera in everyone's hands to revolutionize photography.

integral to its subject. Note how different were the approaches taken by the artists, Henri Regnault and Sybilla von Bondorf."

JSA: *"Is that as true of the other portraits?"*

DA: *"Naturally, Mr. Allen. The christening photo in Alexandria is unimaginable outside, just as the wedding portrait in Vienna is unimaginable indoors. The first is as formal as the latter is fresh. I like them both very much."*

JSA: *"The informal snapshot of me as an infant with my nanny has no definite setting. What do you make of that?"*

DA: *"Ah, that is a timeless Madonna and child. It needs no specified setting, no more than Renaissance painters needed for their imaginary portraits of Mary and Jesus. In this image, however, the Madonna is black and the child is white, suggesting a more secular but no less sacred relation between them."*

JSA: *"And the sculpted pair of birds?"*

DA: *"I like its circular symbolism. In a delicious conceit, the idea of 'L'Esprit ascendant' is vertical, but its visible implications are clearly cyclical. The upshot is a meaningful tension in its sweeping angularity appropriate to the anguished faith expressed by Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetry."*

JSA: *"Are you a cautious idealist then, Mr. Ankers?"*

DA: *"Of course. Not even the most reckless realist likes to lose!"*